

Federal government to opt out of funding

by Donalee Moulton

The Atlantic Association of Universities is currently expressing serious doubts about the support the Federal government will be giving Provinces for higher education by the 1980's. At present the Federal government funds Post Secondary Institutions indirectly through the Provincial governments.

Up until the 1950's, there was very little government funding to aid the Provinces with education. In 1955, however, the government got directly involved and gave so many cents per capita to the Provinces for education. By 1965, this had risen to \$2.00 per capita. After the Commission Report on Funding was completed by Mr. Bladen, this figure rose to \$5.00. The Provinces received this money from the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), which was receiving it directly from the Federal government. Thus, at this point, the Federal government was directly involved with educational funding.

The scheme had one drawback, and that was Quebec. Quebec refused to accept the money allotted it, and it had been steadily accumulating in a bank. Finally,

however, Quebec ceded and took the money. But instead of keeping the old system, it opted for and was granted a new one, known as the Tax Point Transfer. The Federal government gave so many "points" of the taxes collected back to Quebec for educational purposes, while the other nine Provinces were still under the per capita scheme.

This arrangement failed to remain in existence and the Quebec pattern became the pattern for the other nine Provinces. The Federal government's contribution to education was now of an indirect nature and not to many of the Provinces' liking. Hence, in 1966, the Federal and Provincial governments met to reach yet another arrangement - known as the Post Secondary Physical Arrangement.

Under this new arrangement, the Federal government made tax transfers to the Provinces and no longer dealt through the AUCC. It was at this point that the constitutional question arose - education is under Provincial jurisdiction, just how much involvement should the Federal government be allowed?

The new system, brought in the fall of '67, saw the Federal

government giving the Provinces five additional tax points (four from personal income tax and one from corporate income tax) to cover half the cost of operating post secondary education. It covered operational expenditures only. There was no capital funding. If the rebate given a Province from the tax points did not equal half the operating costs, the Federal government made up the difference through an adjustment fund. According to Jeffrey Holmes of the AAU, "Ottawa found itself paying out more on this scheme than it ever thought it would".

Until 1973, the adjustment funds were higher than the tax points, so when the contract was renewed for a further two years, the government put a 15% ceiling on the increase in the total transfer. But a natural drop occurred without the ceiling and the contract was again renewed for two years under the same conditions in 1975.

Since the initiation of the program, it has proved unsatisfactory. The Federal government not only found it an extreme strain on the budget, but they received no recognition for their significant contribution. The current problem concerns the pattern of funding. The present trend shows tax points to be on the increase, with adjustment funds decreasing. The projected funding for 1982 shows that the yield from the tax points will equal expenditures. That means no adjustment fund. And the

AAU feels this will lead to the Federal government granting only tax points, which in turn will lead to Ottawa getting phased out of the agreement. And the universities do not want this.

The diversion to having funds come from only one source is twofold. First, the universities have to account more severely to that source. Secondly, if the Provincial governments end up supporting the universities, they will insist on universities following Provincial priorities. As Mr. Holmes says, "[They] [C]ease to become national institutions and start looking inwards instead of outwards". But as long as the Federal government is involved in a big way universities have to serve national purposes.

The program comes up for renewal in March, 1977. Another two-year extension is being proposed, so that there will be adequate time to work out a new policy. As Jeffrey Holmes sees it, however, they "already had nine years to work out something and have another year, and I think it's bad tactics to work out another two year delay". At that point, he feels it will be even harder to interest Ottawa as the adjustment funds will be even less important. Both levels of government are presently discussing the situation - they may even be ready now to draft an agreement, but Jeffrey Holmes is "Cynical that they will come up with anything better over the next two years".

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U of T may strike

TORONTO (CUP)---"Graduate assistants should hold off on any major planned expenditure this term", warns Graduate Assistants' Association (GAA) organizer Andy Stanley "because people do not get paid while they are on strike."

Stanley cautioned that the very survival of the University of Toronto union, the first of its kind in Canada, is threatened by the University's refusal to agree to compulsory collection of union dues.

The union has been funded by the Graduate Students' Union (GSU) through more than two years of organizing and bickering with the University over certification, but must now find a way to become self-supporting.

"We cannot continue to function" without the compulsory collection of union dues, says Stanley, the union's chief negotiator in current talks with the University. "Without it we will either have to strike or go under."

John Parker, director of Labour-management relations for the U of T, was unwilling to speculate whether the Advisory Committee directing the university bargaining team in the talks would be willing to risk a strike over the compulsory collection issue.

Money matters have yet to be discussed.

The key issues besides the collection issue, include class-size, job security, the right to grieve

excessive working hours, and maintenance of present levels of tutorial and laboratory instruction, according to Stanley.

If the offer remains substantially as it is, I'm afraid we will end up with a strike vote."

Woman's seminar

This weekend a conference organized by Dalhousie students will deal with "The Role of Women in Today's Society". Topics will include: Women in Literature, Male-Female Roles, the New Feminist Theology, and Women's Role in the Economic Machine. Resource personnel include: Doris Dyke, Irene Poelzer, Sue Sherwin, Christine Smiley, and Allan Zdunich.

The seminar will be held from Friday, February 6 to Sunday, February 8 at Camp Brunswick in East Chezzetcook. A \$10.00 fee will provide transportation, food, and lodgings for the weekend. The group will assemble at the SUB foyer Friday at 6:00 p.m. with sleeping bags and warm clothes.

The final session of the weekend will be a strategy session for the Dalhousie Women's Movement. All interested men and women are invited. The conference is sponsored by the Dalhousie Women's Movement and the Student Christian Movement.

For further information phone Cathy at 424-6586 or 455-0823.

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